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The Ghost Haunted.

WRITTEN FOR THE FIREMAN'S JOURNAL.

Among the gay party that enlivened the Chateau that summer, was one conspicuous above all her lady companions. She was tall and extremely beautiful, but of a bearing proud and haughty. Her complexion was dark, her eyes large, black, and flashing. Her raven hair fell in untroubled ringlets about her shoulders. Her features were regular, and a mouth exquisitely formed, disclosed when she laughed, which she frequently did, teeth, even, and of dazzling whiteness. Add to this a figure of faultless symmetry, always attired with unexceptionable taste, and you may have some idea of the beautiful Kate Bayard.

She was a great equestrian; and as she sat upon her horse, dressed in her rich dark riding habit, which set off her brilliant beauty to fine advantage, I sometimes thought I had never seen a more splendid looking woman. But her bold, dashing manner, and a supercilious expression that her face always wore, betrayed a proud unfeeling heart, which though it might not detract from the admiration of the other sex, gained her very few friends among her own. Her tastes and habits were masculine. The most spirited horse in Mr. Mordaunt's stables became under her guidance gentle as a lamb. Often when returning from a ride with her companions, prancing gaily through the streets, I have seen her suddenly dash from them, and urging her horse to its utmost speed, make it clear at a bound the six barred gate which opened into the park; then turn, and waving her whip exultingly over her head, provoke them to follow her example. Truth to say, there were few among her gallants who dared to do so. Those who succeeded, she cheered with a loud huzza, and furiously lashing her horse, scooped with them up the winding road of the hill, her ringing laugh sounding loud and clear above the stamper of the running horses. At other times I saw her alone upon the river in a skiff, which she propelled with a speed equalled only by the strongest rowers; carolling the while some boatman's song, or laughing in derision at her many admirers who had gathered on the bank to witness her prowess. It was said that she could throw a stone for an immense distance with unerring aim. She could fence like a dragon, and was such a dead shot with a pistol or rifle, that her lovers called her the Huntress of Kentucky, and talked of getting up a rifle company in her honor. Nor was she less expert in feminine accomplishments. Some of the most elaborate embroidery that decorated her dresses was her own handwork. She sketched like an artist. That little view of the Falls of the Walkill, which you see over the mantle, was made by her. Early one morning I found her sitting alone upon a bluff that overlooks that beautiful cascade. She had just finished the sketch as I approached her, and as I involuntarily uttered an exclamation of admiration, she placed it in my hands and bid me keep it as it pleased me. Then drawing from her girdle a neatly jeweled watch and saying she glanced at it, "it is time for my tormentors to be stirring," she bounded off toward the chateau with the grace and agility of a fawn. She was no less distinguished in the drawing-room. Perfectly mistress of all the arts of coquetry and flirtation, she was constantly surrounded by a bevy of admirers, whom she not only entertained but fascinated. In dancing, she was grace itself. In music, a proficient. She sang the simple ballads of our own land with an expression and feeling that almost moved her hearers to tears, while she rendered the gems of the opera with the brilliant execution of a "Prima Donna." Often of a moonlight night as I sat in my verandah, I heard her finely cultivated voice far above the revelry of the festive mansion whence it rose, waiving many a beautiful echo in the silent hills. In a word, this remarkable woman was the admiration of the other sex and the envy of her own. An only daughter of one of the oldest and wealthiest families in the State, no care or expense had been spared in her education, while idolized by her father and petted by her brother, she had been indulged in every whim. During her visit, the particular attention paid her by Mr. Mordaunt, was the subject of general remark. The stern severity of his countenance relaxed only in her presence, and his habitual gloom was often dissipated by the boyish levity of her manners. They were frequently together, and he never seemed so happy as when by her side. People wondered that his wife was not jealous and I dare say she was not; but her husband so much as to be indifferent to her fondness for another. But if there could be a woman entirely free from the frailties which usually belong to her sex, Mrs. Mordaunt was that one. At length these festivities and pleasures came to

an end. The summer gradually waned and passed away, and with it the gay people. During the long, cold winter, the chateau was deserted, except by the housekeeper and the few servants who were left in charge. Then the old quiet and silence returned to our sequestered village.

Spring came with its fresh life giving airs, beautiful flowers and sweet singing birds. The healthful showers of the field were resumed, and young shoots springing from the dark ground, responsive to the husbandman's care, soon gave promise of the rich rewards of autumn. Late one afternoon, a large traveling carriage with trunks and portmanteaus strapped behind, lumbered through the village and up the hill to the chateau. The family had returned, but no gay cortege this time accompanied them. The sounds of revelry by night or boisterous merriment by day, no longer resounded in that gorgeous mansion. Mr. and Mrs. Mordaunt, with Emily and their maids, occupied it alone. A solitary stranger might occasionally be seen wending his way up the hill; but his visit seemed one of condolence and sympathy and was never of long duration. The gentle, amiable Mrs. Mordaunt had contracted during the winter, a fatal disease, which ran its course so rapidly, that ere many months had passed, her life was despaired of. Her physicians as a last resource to recruit her failing health and strength, had recommended change of scene and country air. But she, taught by a sad presentiment, returned to the scene of the past year's fleeting pleasures; not so much with the hope of recovery, as a desire to make a peaceful end in the quiet and retirement of her mountain home. Scarcely had she become established there, when I went up to see her. As I entered the house, I was struck by the tomb like silence that reigned. The servants, carefully avoiding every noise, moved quietly about, softly closing doors behind them and addressing each other in whispers. Everything seemed hushed in that awe inspiring stillness which characterizes the house of grief and mourning. Emily, her eyes red with weeping, met me in the hall, and silently pressing my hand, gave me in a voice choked with sobs, a short account of her mother's sufferings, then led me into the sick room. Heaven's! what a sight there met my view. She, who but a few short months before had been blooming in health and beauty, appeared now almost a ghastly skeleton. The bones of her face seemed starting from a skin white and smooth as alabaster. Her hollow cheeks told a piteous story of the ravages of disease. Her thin, pale lips were drawn down in that expression peculiar to the last stage of life. Her raven hair hung in untroubled tresses about her neck and shoulders, enhancing their deathlike hue; and her large, dark eyes now darker and larger than ever, shone with an unearthly lustre. At my approach her face, emanating features lighted up with that same sweet smile which long ago had won my heart. Unable to control myself I rushed to her bedside and catching her thin, small hand in mine, pressed it to my lips and wept aloud. Gently withdrawing it, she tenderly smoothed my hair, and calling me a dear, good creature, bid me compose myself. From that hour, except to attend to the necessary cares of my house, I never left her side during life. And perhaps it was well for Emily that I came as I did in some measure to her relief; for that devoted daughter was so worn with grief and anxiety, that I sometimes feared she herself would share the fate of the beloved mother whom she so constantly watched. The poor lady, bearing her sufferings with the resignation of a martyr, lingered on but a few short weeks. During that time she was frequently visited by Mr. Dorking, but the good man declared she had no need of spiritual comfortings, for her trust was in Heaven, and she looked forward with blissful anticipations to the time when she should be permitted to enter those peaceful realms to which with steadfast hope, she was rapidly approaching. The people of the village, not unmindful of her benefactions, daily sent enquiries about her health, and many a time upon receiving some little offering of fruit or flowers, she expressed in husky whispers how much she was gratified by their kind attentions. Mr. Mordaunt displayed as much tenderness and consideration for his wife, as could be expected from his stern and moody nature. He was ever ready to present the cooling draught; would hold her in his arms for hours; read to her and seek for all kinds of little delicacies from the neighborhood. His step was lighter when he approached and his voice more subdued when he addressed her. But the gloomy expression of his features was never absent; indeed, it seemed to be deepened by the sadness and grief of the occasion. I never could meet the glare of his vacant look without a shudder; nor shall I ever forget it. I can compare it to nothing but the terrified gaze of one who has fixed his eyes upon some dreadful object, from which he finds it impossible to withdraw them. His manners and actions were like those of one walking in his dreams, and though at times by an evident effort, he roused himself to a consciousness of, and interest in the scenes about him, the shadow soon returned and he quickly relapsed into his gloom. But I fear that I am dwelling too long upon those sad passages and will hasten their conclusion.

One afternoon as I returned to the chateau after a short visit to the village, I found Emily sitting on the piazza weeping bitterly. Believing that Death had at last come and she was there yielding to the first whispers of her affliction, I did not attempt to console her, but with tears flowing in sympathy, seated myself in silence by her side. When she became more composed, she told me that soon after I left, her mother grew rapidly worse; her father and herself, who were sitting with her, thought she was dying. But suddenly her mother half raised herself in bed and desiring

to be alone with her father, had requested her to leave the room; since then the door had been locked and she could not re-enter. While I was wondering at the privacy of a husband and wife which required the absence of an only daughter at such a time, I heard a hurried tread in the archway, and from the open door Mr. Mordaunt rushed forth. His wild and haggard appearance startled me. The gloomy expression of his features had given place to one of distraction and despair, and his eyes seemed to glare with frenzy. I feared some violent end had befallen the lady. My looks must have expressed my thoughts, for pointing to his wife's chamber, he hurried past us. I saw him rush madly down the lawn. I saw him tear his hair and heard him cry Oh God! Oh God! have mercy; and I watched him till the trees and deepening shades of evening took him from my view. "Emily," said I, "I am afraid your father will destroy himself." My mother! My mother! she exclaimed, and seizing my hand hurried me to the dying woman's bedside. She was sleeping calmly, but there were traces of deep emotion upon her pale face. Her eyes were red and swollen, and tears still glistened upon her hollow cheeks. We feared that the long interview with her husband, had been too much for her wearied spirit and she had sunk exhausted into her last sleep. The evening was one of those which sometimes follow a hot midsummer day; when in the heavy stillness of the air, every voice and natural sound is hushed. Cattle are seen reclining lazily beneath the trees, and human creatures seek the cooling covert of their houses. The cricket neglects to chirp, the birds flit noiselessly and listlessly about, the leaves hang motionless upon the trees, not a ripple disturbs the mirroring surface of the lake and the very hum of insects has a dreamy, drowsy tone. Twilight faded and darkness deepened around us as we watched the last moments of the sufferer. At length she opened her eyes and as they rested upon Emily, for a moment the flickering flame of life gave them something of their wonted brightness. Mother and daughter were instantly in each other's arms. She tried to speak. I raised her from the pillows. Her embrace grew tighter round her arms. "I am leaving you Emily, Love thy father; pity him and pray—" the hands relaxed, a film gathered over her eyes, the dark death settled on her brow, the breathing stopped, a slight quivering of the whole frame and all was over. Emily in a passionate burst of grief that seemed like the outpouring of a broken heart, clung still more closely to the lifeless body. I turned from the soul piercing sight and looked out upon the Heavens. As I gazed, the bright stars shone out one by one and I could not help thinking them beautiful angels coming to welcome a new spirit to the home of the blessed. She whom the whole village loved, was attended to the grave by all its people; and many a grateful heart which her charities had cheered, still mourns her untimely death. Mr. Dorking never read our beautiful funeral service with better expression, or made its touching language more impressive. She was buried in a spot of her own choosing just over the hill where the willows droop into the lake.

CHAPTER II.

About a week afterwards Emily and her father departed for the city. I endeavored to detain the former with me in the hope that I might divert her grief, which was excessive. But she told me that her mother's dying words enjoined a constant attendance upon her father, and though grateful for my kind intentions she was determined not to leave him. Since the funeral I had become more intimately acquainted with Mr. Mordaunt, and learned to regard him more favorably. His great affliction somewhat softened his sternness of manner and revealed that terrible glare of his eyes of much of its intensity. He was kind and attentive to his gentle daughter. I loved him for that, and in his demeanor towards myself I must admit he was always a gentleman. If I appear too prolix in relating all these little circumstances you must attribute it to the lasting impression which they made upon my memory. Two years rolled away before Mr. Mordaunt again made his appearance, Emily did not accompany him but in her place was my old acquaintance Kate Bayard, who in the interval had become his wife. They established themselves in the chateau where seeing very little company they lived almost in seclusion. Those of the village who called upon them, described her as greatly changed, being haughty arrogant and supercilious, in no respect, like the lamented Mrs. Mordaunt whom they could not remember without regret, and they did not care to repeat their visit. The servants of the house said that the new couple did not live very happily and were constantly quarrelling. Mr. Mordaunt too was changed. His old gloom did not seem much lessened, but the strange glare of his eyes had given place to an expression of trouble and vexation, and as he wandered about the village moody and mournful, not one but staring at him, he appeared more like a crazy person than a rational creature. Notwithstanding our former intimacy, he greeted me when we met more like a half remembered acquaintance than an old friend. His forgetfulness pained me for I felt quite a liking as well as sympathy for the man and hoped by cultivating his acquaintance to penetrate the mystery of his manner which I was convinced arose from some secret grief or the remembrance of some dreadful crime.

One day he was seen to set out in his traveling carriage with a large quantity of baggage as if bound upon a long journey, leaving his wife alone at the chateau. Every body wondered at this strange proceeding and the next day the whole village was thrown into the wildest excitement by a terrible incident. Nancy Neal the ladies maid,

reported that on entering her mistress's room early in the morning to assist her to dress as was her custom, she had found her lying dead upon the floor with her throat cut from ear to ear, and surrounded by a pool of blood. She immediately alarmed the household who spread the news like wildfire through the town. Squire Quirk with a number of others went up to the house and held an inquest. It was discovered that the chests and drawers in the room had been rifled of every thing of value, which made them conclude that the murder had been committed for the sake of plunder. Men set off in every direction in pursuit of the murderer. Meanwhile the excitement in the village grew more and more intense; nothing so dreadful had happened since the Indian massacre. The story was told over and over again, and numbers were the conjectures as to who could have committed so horrible a crime. In the afternoon some of the pursuers returned bringing in a poor little Frenchman named Robin Callot, or Red Carrot as he was called by his companions. He was Mr. Mordaunt's private valet, but for some reason had been left behind at that gentleman's sudden departure. He had apprehended him at one of the lower landings just as he was going on board a sloop bound down the river. His appearance at that distance from the chateau during his mistress's absence excited suspicions, which were so much strengthened by his frightened manner and the unsatisfactory account he gave of himself that they thought proper to search him, when in his knapsack and concealed in various places about his person, they found numerous articles which were immediately recognized as belonging to the Mordaunt family. They immediately took him into custody and brought him back with them. On his examination before Squire Quirk he said as his trial afterwards K— he vehemently asserted his innocence of the murder, though confessing the theft, and his story was invariably the same. It was nearly as follows. He said "that on the morning after his mistress's departure he had risen quite early and not knowing what to do with himself determined to take a stroll upon the lawn. In passing through the hall on his way down he noticed that the door of his mistress's room was open; surprised at so unusual a circumstance, he stopped to see if she was stirring, hearing no noise he ventured to look in, and was perfectly horror struck at finding her lying upon the floor murdered in cold blood. His first impulse was to rouse the house, but the fear that he himself would be the first one suspected withheld him. Day was just breaking and every one in the house but himself was asleep. While he was considering what had best be done his eyes rested upon a silver night ewer and some jewels that lay in open sight upon the toilette. Cupidity and the temptation of the hour got the better of his fear. He not only secured the articles which first attracted him, but growing bolder rummaged the drawers and taking every thing that was of value made off with his booty before anyone was awake." Robin was a quiet inoffensive little man, not particularly gifted with intelligence, and the last person to suspect of so awful a thing as this. Besides he told his story with such an air of truth and sincerity, and persisted in it so firmly that a great many believed him innocent. But the proof against him, was so positive, no other person had been seen near the chateau, the articles for which he was believed the murderer was committed were found in his possession, his clothes stained with blood, and rolled up into a bundle were discovered in a thicket by the side of the road which he had taken to reach the landing and a bloody razor was found by the side of the dead body which was identified as the one with which he had usually shaven his master. The court felt compelled to convict him and he was hung in the public square of K—for the murder of Katherine Mordaunt; yet a doubt of his guilt still remained and there was a mystery about the whole affair which made it a frequent theme of conversation long afterwards.

The friends of the murdered lady came up from New York as soon as they received the news of her violent death. Among them was a white haired old man with a gold headed cane, who seemed completely bowed down with sorrow, and ever by his side a young man of about twenty, who seemed to be a close companion. They were immediately recognized as her father and only brother, and their movements were watched with the greatest sympathy. These with the tender hand of affection placed the mangled body of the once proud beauty in an elegant coffin, and conveyed it back to the city where it was attended by a stately procession to the vault of her father. The chateau was closed and the servants dismissed. It remained unoccupied for more than three years, during which time I heard nothing either of Mr. Mordaunt or Emily.

Strange stories were told about the scene of the dreadful tragedy, many reported that when passing near it at night they had heard screams and groans and awful noises, and sometimes as of old, the whole house had appeared brilliantly lighted while they could distinctly hear sounds of mirth and revelry, said which loud and clear could be distinguished a rich female voice singing some wild unearthly melody.

One cold night in Autumn, as I sat knitting in my little parlor, I heard a timid knock at the door. When I opened it, a woman dressed in black and closely veiled uttered my name with a cry of joy, and fell fainting into my arms. I bore her to the fire and withdrawing her veil her light fell upon the face of Emily. It was pale emaciated and haggard and in its sorrowful lineaments, I read a long history of woe and wretchedness. As she slowly revived under the restoratives which I applied, she again recognized me, and throwing her arms about my neck gave vent to a flood of tears. When she became more composed she told me her story. It was brief and full of sorrow. Upon their return to

the city, she and her father had lived in the greatest retirement, but in spite of all her efforts to cheer him he seemed so unconsoled, that in the hope of diverting his thoughts from his loss, she induced him to re-enter society. At one of the brilliant entertainments which his partner gave in honor of his return he again met Kate Bayard, renewed his former intimacy and finally married her. This lady had taken an unaccountable dislike to my gentle Emily which when she became her step mother she displayed by a course of tyrannical, actous and malicious persecutions so intolerable that the poor girl sought refuge in marriage. The man to whom she thus madly united herself, proved a graceless heartless prodigal who for five years, during which he managed to run through her property and his own, made her the most unhappy of wives. A random shot in a drunken brawl at length destroyed his life and restored her freedom, but left her almost destitute. Her husband's vile courses had long since alienated the few friends her retiring disposition had made, her step mother was dead, her father absent. She could think of no one but herself to whom to look for sympathy or aid. By the sale of her few remaining effects, she raised money enough to defray the expenses of the journey, and partly by stage, partly on foot, she at length reached my door in the miserable plight in which she appeared to me. My tears fell fast at this recital, but comforting and cheering her to the best of my power, I prevailed upon her to take some refreshments, and she staid with me that night. In the morning she determined to take up her abode in the chateau, I pressed her to make my house her home but she declined to trespass upon the hospitality of a friend, when she laughingly said she had a father's house to go to. Finding her firm in this resolution, I ceased to persuade and accompanied her to the old place the scene of such different events. And Oh how unlike it seemed to what it was when the beauty and fashion of the distant city revelled there in wealth and luxury. The gravel walks were overgrown with grass. The fountain had ceased to play, the artificial lake drained to a mere puddle, the flower garden which had been the pride of the first Mrs. Mordaunt, was almost obliterated. The walls were time stained and moss grown. All around had an air of desolation and neglect, and the wind as it sighed among the trees or whirled the falling leaves about, had a lonely mournful sound that filled my heart with melancholy. There was no less a change inside. We noticed as we entered that a damp chill feeling and mouldy smell peculiar to houses long shut up and deserted. The rain percolating through the neglected roof, had stained and cracked the fretted ceilings and traced amid the bright hues of the beautifully frescoed walls, many a line and dirty color which the painter had never imagined. Succo ornaments detached by the dampness, from the arches and cornices lay in crumbling fragments on the tessellated pavements and turkey carpets. Costly Italian paintings were half obscured by mould and moisture. The furniture and heavy damask draperies were musty and moth eaten, every thing seemed fading and decaying. As I wandered through these unattended, but elegantly furnished rooms, I could not help thinking of the murder of the late haughty mistress, whose ghost had been so long their occupant, and as we entered the rooms where she had slept we both started at sight of a large blood stain on its floor a horrid and ineffaceable record of the dreadful deed there perpetrated. I felt like an intruder in a place sacred as the abode of her spirit and shuddered as I hurried out and shut the door. Emily chose her own mother's room for her quarters. Every familiar object there brought a thousand sudden memories to her heart and tears to her. Her first action on entering it was to throw herself into a chair and weep. Why she preferred this I know not, unless it was in the same feeling that we are wont to visit the grave of our loved ones; experiencing a mournful pleasure in recalling those memories which soften while they deepen our grief. Well, I made a fire, dusted and rearranged the furniture, aired the bed, and at a late hour of the night, left the creature to her repose; not without many misgivings, however, and I often wished on my way home that instead of leaving her in that lonely, haunted house, I had prevailed upon her to accompany me.

Early the next morning she burst into my parlor the very picture of extreme terror. She had on scarcely more than her night clothes. Her hair was dishevelled; her face pale as ashes. Her eyes seemed starting from her sockets and she trembled in every limb. Nervously seizing my arm she told me in a voice almost inaudible through fright, that after I had left her she was unable to sleep. A sense of loneliness and an unaccountable, indescribable dread of something awful, made her restless and wakeful. Unable to overcome these strange sensations or compose herself to slumber, she became weary of her bed and was about to get up to seat herself by the window, when the room suddenly became filled with a blaze of lurid light so intensely brilliant that the minutest object was distinctly visible. Surprised at this phenomenon, she half rose and looked around her. What was her horror to see at this moment the door thrown open and bolted, spring noisily open and a tall figure clothed in white glide silently in. At a glance she recognized it as that of her step mother. Unable to utter a word or withdraw her eyes from the terrible phantom, she watched it as it moved towards the window; then saw it turn and with the same hateful frown which she wore during her life, approach her bed. She thinks she must have swooned with terror, for she was conscious of nothing more. When she awoke the day was just breaking. As she slowly regained her senses, the dreadful apparition which had so enthralled them,

came vividly to her remembrance. Determined not to remain another minute in the house, she sprang from the bed and casting a cloak over her shoulders without stopping to dress, hurried down to me. I pressed her throbbing heart to mine and though trembling almost as much as she, strove to calm her agitation; assuring her that all she had seen was but the effect of an imagination disordered and distraught by her sufferings. Even as I spoke she started from me and crying in a tone of horror, "merciful powers, she comes again, she is here," fell at my feet in convulsions. As I gazed upon her writhing in frightful contortions at my feet, I was almost distracted. I feared that this terrible visitation would make my Emily a maniac for life, and I revolved in my mind every expedient I could think of to avert so awful a fate. At this juncture, good Mr. Dorking came in; the very person of all others I would have wished most to see. With his assistance I got the poor creature into bed. Slowly the fit passed off, but as I feared, it had deprived her of reason. She was totally unconscious of her situation and of all around her; while her piteous cries and delirious expressions were perfectly heart-rending. Hopeless of affording any relief and filled with the direst forebodings, I gazed upon her in speechless agony. He did me to be comforted, said that with rest and quiet, and God's permission, she would be well in a few days perhaps a few hours. As she cheered me with these encouraging words, he administered a sleeping potion to her and soon afterwards I had the pleasure of seeing my darling in a peaceful slumber. Then I told him her history and related in her own words, the scene of the last night. Strange to say this good man was a believer in ghosts or spiritual manifestations as he called them, and in a very grave manner told me that God in his superior wisdom sometimes saw fit to make his will known by supernatural means; and he had doubtless caught the unquiet spirit of the murdered woman to revisit the earth to make some revelation which it behooved us to hear. So he determined to get some of his parishioners to accompany him to the chateau at midnight when the ghost would probably again make its appearance and by accosting it, he should learn its mission. Then giving me some directions about his patient, he took his leave.

He experienced more difficulty than he anticipated in finding any one who was willing to join him in his dreadful undertaking. All sympathized in Emily's misfortune, but few had courage to brave the spectre that had so appalled her. At length by his persuasions and exhortations he prevailed upon two fellows to accompany him; and I partly by my own curiosity and partly by their entreaties, was induced to make one of the party.

(To be continued.)

Sacramento Fire Department.

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

(Edited according to an Act of Congress.)

NUMBER 14.

On the 3rd of Feb'y. 1857, the Neptune Hose Co. again petitioned the Board for admission into the Department, and a resolution recommending the Common Council to admit said company under certain restrictions was adopted with but one dissenting vote—fifteen members of the Board being present.

On the 16th of the same month, upon the recommendation of the Fire and Water Committee, the Common Council adopted the recommendation of the Board of Delegates, and admitted into the Department Neptune Hose Co. No. 1.

At the same meeting a communication from Engine Co. No. 2, accompanied by Preamble and Resolutions, expressing the wishes of said company in the matter of the admission of new companies into the Department, and instructing their Delegates to vote against the admission of any company, unless it should be located at some point east of 5th street was read, received, and ordered on file.

A communication from L. E. Burkner, Assistant Engineer, recommending the Board to take some action, in the matter of graveling or planking the cross streets, on which are located Engine Houses, so that the companies might have free egress to J. and K streets, was read and a committee of one appointed to communicate with the Common Council on the subject and if possible obtain from that body the end desired.

At a subsequent meeting of the Board, Mr. Rowland reported that the Council had agreed to the recommendation of the Board of Delegates and would at an early day make the proposed improvement.

At the same meeting Mr. Devine suggested the necessity of dividing the city into "Fire Districts," select a Bell-ringer whose duty it shall be to ring the number of the District at every alarm or fire, and that the Board have one of the Bells now in use by the Department placed in some central part of the city to be used as a general alarm-bell for the Department.

The subject matter was referred to a committee of three, composed of Messrs. Devine, Watson, and Halley, who on the 3rd of February '57 submitted the following report, which was laid on the table and ordered published:

To the officers and Members of the Board of Delegates Fire Department.

GENTLEMEN:—The Special Committee to whom was referred the subject matter relative to dividing the city, etc., respectfully report, that they have carefully considered the proposition, and that the more they examine and investigate the subject the more they are impressed with its importance, and confirmed in the opinion of its importance to the Department. Therefore they recommend its immediate adoption, as they feel assured that when

in successful operation it will not only be fully understood and appreciated, but become a permanent and popular measure, both in and out of the Department; They also fully concur in the opinion that all necessary expense incurred from the city or citizens, directly or indirectly, to provide a suitable bell for the Department, and to carry out the contemplated project, will be but a small consideration compared with the beneficial results that must subsequently be apparent, clearly demonstrated, and acknowledged by all.

Your Committee propose and recommend that the city be divided into four districts, as per accompanying diagram, and to locate in said Districts, as far as possible, a site for a city bell of suitable dimensions, said bell to be elevated at a sufficient height so as to command an unobstructed view of the entire city, and to place in charge of it a trustworthy person, on a salary, whose duty it shall be to attend to it at all hours, day and night, such duties and compensation to be prescribed by the Board of Delegates. Your Committee feel themselves incompetent to recommend a system to be adopted at present in giving the alarm of fire, they therefore only suggest for the consideration of the Board the following, viz: In the event of an alarm being false, to tap the bell slowly five times, then after an interval, say of about five seconds, repeat it for several times, which will be sufficient to notify the entire Department of that fact, and obviate the necessity of leaving their houses. Should there be a fire, however, give a general alarm by ringing the bell as rapidly as possible without any intermission for about five seconds. Then tap the bell from one to four, the number of the district in which the fire may occur. Thus if in the 1st District, one, one, one, then after an interval of a few seconds, repeat the general alarm, and again—once, one, one, and so on.

Your committee are unable at present to recommend any bell outside of the Department, or a suitable locality for one until arrangements can be made to procure one, but think the use of Engine Company No. 3's bell can be procured temporarily from that company, to test the experiment.

Your Committee cannot refrain from reporting that they thought the observatory of the Dawson House, situated on Fourth near J street, a good location, and accordingly they called on Mr. Dawson, and asked permission to examine for themselves, when Mr. D. informed them very positively that he would not permit them to do so. He was then informed of their object in asking permission, when he gave them particularly to understand that he would not allow a bell placed there, but stated that if they would give him \$10,000 he would accommodate them; which very ungenerous and liberal offer your Committee were compelled to decline, owing to the state of their finances. All of which is respectfully submitted.

WM. H. WATSON,
J. C. HALLEY,
P. J. DEVINE.

February 3, 1857.

The Military.

YOUNG AMERICA GUARDS.—This prudent Rifle Corps, composed of a number of young men of this city and commanded by Capt. Egan, were out on parade on Wednesday evening last. The Guards are under the constant tuition of Capt. E. A. Riggs, of the Marine Rifles. Under his skillful care and the energetic efforts of their young commander, they will no doubt rapidly acquire a thorough knowledge of military tactics.

DOWNSVILLE.—The Forest Rifles had a prize target shooting on Saturday, August 1st. The prizes were, 1st, a gold medal, of the value of \$25; 2d, a silver medal, in the form of a star; 3d, a gold pen and pencil; 4th, the usual medal for the worst shooting. The target was 25 inches in diameter; the distance 100 yards; number of shots fired at, 96; number of shots in the target, 60. Considering the fact that the weapons are United States Rifles, the shots of which are rather coarse, and that they are had on city, it is rather to be confessed, is excellent shooting.

A new military company is to be organized in Downsville.

FOLSOM FIRE DEPARTMENT.—The Folsom Mutual H. and L. Co. was first organized March 3, 1857 and have now forty-five active members. The following are the officers:

Henry B. Waddell, Foreman.
Charles Plattner, 1st Assistant.
Frank Wheeler, 2nd Assistant.
H. D. Bowley, Secretary.

The company have a fine truck and apparatus which cost them about one thousand dollars. Water has lately been introduced into the town through four inch cast iron pipes. The work has been accomplished by the Railroad Company for their use at the depot, and also for the benefit of the citizens in the case of fire.

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF DELEGATES.—The Board of Delegates some time ago petitioned the Common Council to provide an allowance for the above office, of \$150 or \$200 per annum. The Chief Engineer also recommended in his last report. The Council referred the matter to a committee, and at the last meeting the committee reported the same back without recommendation. We think the Fire Department has been treated most ably in this affair. The duties of the Secretary of the Board of Delegates, are many and troublesome. He is the officer whose duty it is to keep a record of all the names of all the members of the Department, and to his books alone can credence be given in the case of any dispute among the various companies who show who have been elected, they cannot show who have or have not been confirmed by the Board of Delegates. At present there is no active Secretary of the Board, we believe. No one will perform the duties gratis. The records of the Fire Department will be unwritten. A man may serve in it faithfully, and endanger life and limb for ten years, and then be unable to claim exemption under the statute, from military or other duty, simply because the city would not pay a paltry salary to a man for keeping the record of the Board of Delegates. We know that there is much dissatisfaction felt among the firemen because of the refusal of the Board to do so. In this instance, we hope that the body may make the provision requested of them.—*Marysville Inquirer.*

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